



A Basque Bookshelf

One of the aims of the Amerikanuak! Project is to stimulate increased study of the Basques by the general public. To achieve this end, it is distributing a collection of excellent books on the Basque experience to 20 participating libraries in four states. Most of the books included in this "Basque Bookshelf" collection can also be purchased through the University of Nevada Press, Dept. FW93, MS 166, Reno, NV 89557-0076 (702) 784-6573.

Amerikanuak: Basques in the New World
by William A. Douglass and Jon Bilbao
University of Nevada Press

In the melting pot of peoples that make up the New World, probably less is known about the Basques than any other ethnic group.

It may come as a surprise to laymen and even some historians to learn that the Basques have been present in the New World for at least five centuries. The threads of this story have been unraveled by anthropologist William a. Douglass and historian Jon Bilbao.

Seafaring Basques led the way in their pursuit of whales across uncharted oceans, certainly seeing Newfoundland and Canada in the early 1500s and perhaps long before. Christopher Columbus's first expedition was dependent upon Basque ships and sailors. The exploits of Basque conquistadors, missionaries, and colonists formed a dramatic part of the history of South America, Mexico, and Spanish California. Basque shepherders were the backbone of the now nearly-vanished range sheep empires of the American West.

As background to understanding the Basque character and their homeland in the Pyrenean mountains and seacoasts between France and Spain, authors Douglass and Bilbao trace the Basque from their mysterious origins in prehistory to the age of exploration.

Basque Nationalism

B

y Stanley G. Payne
University of Nevada Press

The confrontation between the Franco regime and Basque nationalists in recent years has produced a series of spectacular political assassinations, trials, and reprisals.

In this work, internationally noted historian Stanley G. Payne presents a vivid account of a century of ferment to establish an independent Basque country.

In his probing into the causes and consequences of Basque nationalism from its origins until the present, he has provided a fascinating and well-written account of available opposition movement capable of challenging the unity of the Spanish state.

At the same time, Professor Payne explores the many nuances, contradictory trends, and diverse opinions within the ranks of the Basque nationalists themselves. What emerges is the portrait of a movement that is fragmented into many groups of differing political ideologies, goals, and tactics.

Basque Nationalism is a work of major importance for any student of Iberian history. In a broader sense, it is also critical to an understanding of how ethnic enclaves relate to central authority within modern nation-states.

A Book of the Basques

by Rodney Gallop

University of Nevada Press

Rodney Gallop's classic work on the Basques was first published in England in 1930. It is a comprehensive study in English of the mysterious race that inhabits the Pyrenees mountains and seacoasts between France and Spain.

This book probes into the unsolved origins of the Basques, their long struggle to preserve racial identity in the face of invasions, and, most importantly, the strength of character that has enabled the Basques to survive. Their complex language, folklore, ancient dances and sports, art, and architecture are also treated with insight.

Gallop's sound scholarship has yielded a book that is required reading for the serious student of ethnic cultures. His lucid literary style also makes this a vivid book.

Beltran: Basque Sheepman of the American West

by Beltran Paris

as told to William A. Douglass

University of Nevada Press

Born and raised on a small farm in the Basque region of France, Beltran Paris emigrated to the American West in 1912 at the age of 23. Unable to speak a word of English, Paris made the long journey to join his cousins in Wyoming. Moving on to Nevada, Paris worked as a shepherd and then a camp tender in the deserts and mountains near Elko. He learned quickly and eventually purchased a ranch of his own, married, and started a family.

By the end of his life Paris was the owner of an extensive ranching operation and several thousand acres of land. However, the road to success was not easy. Paris barely survived the farm crash of 1921 and the rigors of the depression and drought years, and later he lost considerable livestock in the disastrous blizzards of 1948-49.

In his own words, Beltran Paris tells a story that is characteristic of the lives of many Basque immigrants who endured hardships but had rewarding experiences as well.

Basque Shepherders of the American West

Photographs by Richard Lane

Text by William A. Douglass

University of Nevada Press

For more than a century, Basque shepherders have been an integral part of the development of the American West. Leading a near solitary and nomadic existence in

the region's vast deserts and mountains, the Basque herder was both pioneer and backbone of a frail human presence in an otherwise undisturbed natural setting. The sheepcamp was superbly adapted to living conditions on the open range, affording the herder comfort and shelter from the elements, yet streamlined to permit easy portability from site to site.

While Basque sheepherders were once ubiquitous on the open range of the thirteen western states, today they number only one hundred to two hundred individuals.

Each aspect of the sheepherder's work is surveyed in this study, including lambing, trailing, shearing, docking, shipping, and winter and summer herding. The sheepherder's personal life is also explored, from the lonely sheep camps to the Basque boardinghouse to the colorful festivals held in the West during the summer. The photographs are drawn from a variety of geographical areas and are representative of sheepherders throughout the American West.

Sweet Promised Land

by Robert Laxalt

The University of Nevada Press

In this warm and moving story, Robert Laxalt paints an affectionate portrait of his immigrant father. Dominique Laxalt, a Basque-American sheepherder, is persuaded by his family to return home for a long-planned visit after living nearly half a century on the ranges of the American West. Accompanied by his son Robert, Dominique travels to his native Basque country in the French Pyrenees. His return to the village and mountain trails of his youth evokes ambiguous feelings as he describes to his relatives the life of hardship he has endured in the United States. The nostalgic trip to his native land ends poignantly as the elder Laxalt realizes that America has become his true home. Told with compelling sensitivity, this story portrays a family whose members share a strength of character drawn from their peasant ancestors yet remain separated by diverse cultures on different continents.

The Basques: The Franco Years and Beyond

by Robert G. Clark

University of Nevada Press

Robert Clark provides the first English-language treatment of Basque nationalism during the post-Franco era. The work complements earlier work of Stanley Payne, *Basque Nationalism*, in two ways. Whereas Payne employs a Madrid-centric perspective in order to analyze Basque Nationalism as a regional challenge to central authority, Clark's view is Basque-centric and depicts the Spanish state as the abrogator of the rights of unique people and culture. Secondly, Payne's work essentially terminates with the Spanish Civil War whereas the bulk of Clark's work deals with the Franco period and its

aftermath. Clark bases his analysis upon published sources and interviews with Basque nationalists of various persuasions. Clark also lends a personal touch to his work, since his father-in-law, Manuel Irujo, was the last Minister of Justice in the Spanish Republican government and a member of the Basque government-in-exile.

A Time We Knew

Images of Yesterday in the Basque Homeland

Photographs by William Albert Allard

Text by Robert Laxalt

University of Nevada Press

In the late 1960s a profound change was taking place in the rural Basque culture of the Pyrenees. A way of life that had remained almost static for generations was coming to an end. The days of wooden shoes and oxen and hand-hewn yokes were numbered. The coming of the tractor embodied more than the appearance of a complex and impersonal machine, it was a symbol of progress and violent change in the lives and attitudes of peasant farmers.

Photographer William Albert Allard and writer Robert Laxalt were there to capture the change in image and prose. In *A Time We Knew*, Allard's striking images and Laxalt's lyrical prose capture forever the way it once was in the homeland of the Basques: village market days filled with animals and farm folk, handball and jai alai, courtings and song; the sound of tiny bells as the valley flocks wend their way in spring to grassy slopes above the timberline; the vanishing bard and the presence of song at the table, in the bistros, and on the mountain; cobblestone streets and country lanes and old farmhouses; mountain people for whom "the little people" are reality and not superstition.

The High Desert Museum

The High Desert Museum, located 3.5 miles south of Bend, Oregon, is a living, participatory museum with a wide variety of indoor and outdoor exhibits and presentations on nature, art, science and history of the Intermountain West. Its mission is to broaden the knowledge and understanding of the natural and cultural history and resources of the High Desert for the purpose of promoting thoughtful decision-making that will sustain the region's natural and cultural heritage.

In December 1994, the Museum announced a three-year campaign to build a Native American wing, a year-round birds of prey center and four other components needed to carry out its mission.

For more information, please call (503) 382-4754, or write The High Desert Museum, 59800 South Highway 97, Bend, Oregon 97702.

The Idaho Humanities Foundation

The Idaho Humanities Foundation, located in Boise Idaho, is a non-profit (501(c)(3) organization established in 1990 for the purpose of designing, developing and managing educational programs in a variety of liberal arts disciplines throughout the Inter-mountain West. Supported primarily by private funds, it concentrates on direct service to the general public and selected academic constituents.

The Foundation encourages programming partnerships with other educational and cultural organizations. It does not make grants. For further information, write The Idaho Humanities Foundation, 111 Broadway, STE 133-165, Boise, Idaho 83702-7200.